



First Children's Finance

April 17, 2024

Senator Melissa H. Wiklund, Chair
Committee on Health and Human Service
Minnesota Senate

Re: SF3737 Child Care Improvement Grants

Dear Senator Wiklund,

On behalf of First Children's Finance, I am writing to thank you for including funding for child care improvement grants in the Senate Health and Human Services omnibus supplemental appropriation bill. This funding, appropriated to the Department of Human Services, would allow for continuation of needed support to child care providers with facility repair needs and result in the retention and creation of new child care slots for children across Minnesota.

As current holders of a contract with the Department of Human Services to administer these funds, First Children's Finance has seen the difference that small grants for facility repairs can make in the availability of child care. With equity-focused strategies such as no matching funds required, up-front payment rather than reimbursement, and allowance for private child care businesses to apply directly, this program has ensured that the small businesses that Minnesota trusts to care for our children have an equitable opportunity to access capital to address their facility needs.

We thank you and the rest of the Health and Human Services committee for your support and partnership in this endeavor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Suzanne Pearl". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Suzanne Pearl
Minnesota Director
suzannep@firstchildrensfinance.org